

HALIBUT FISHERY.

The halibut fishery of Alaska comes next to the salmon fishery in production and value of product. It comprises seven fishing grounds, which from east to west are as follows: Noyes Island, Coronation Island, Cape Spencer, Yakutat, Yakataga, Cape Cleare, and Portlock Banks. All of these localities are visited by the larger vessels of the halibut fleet, the Yakutat grounds and Portlock Banks producing the bulk of the catch delivered at Puget Sound and British Columbia ports. The smaller vessels frequent the inshore grounds of southeast Alaska, and deliver their catches principally to Alaskan ports, although the larger of these frequently go to Prince Rupert where a better price is obtained for their fish. Any boat that makes a catch of 10,000 pounds or more found it advantageous to make delivery at the Canadian Port rather than at Petersburg or Ketchikan, not only because they received a better price but rather for the reason that boats could be discharged immediately and reoutfit for another fishing trip without the loss of time which invariably resulted when delivery was made at Alaskan ports, particularly Petersburg. Fishermen had a just grievance against certain fish companies. Frequently the fishermen who exercised the most care in packing and icing their catch on the fishing grounds, were forced to accept a lower price for it, or submit to an unnecessary delay in discharging with the attendant risk of some loss of fish. Other boats whose catch was handled with less care, were allowed to discharge in a short time after reaching port, apparently for the reason that they obtained their ice from the fish companies. This unreasonable discrimination was in itself enough to divert considerable business to Prince Rupert.

The total catch of halibut on the Pacific coast was approximately 60,000,000 pounds, of which probably 30,000,000 pounds were taken from the grounds contiguous to the coast of Alaska. Available statistics show, however, that only a little more than 13,000,000 pounds ~~were~~^{was} credited to Alaska. Undoubtedly a large part of the halibut delivered at Prince Rupert ~~are~~^{is} also taken on these grounds, so that the estimate as above given is substantially correct.

Those chiefly engaged in the halibut industry in Alaska in 1917, were the Alaska Coast Fish Co., at Douglas; Booth Fisheries Co., at Sitka; Columbia & Northern Fishing & Packing Co., at Wrangell; Glacier Fish Co., at Petersburg and at Scow Bay where the barge Glory of the Seas was used as a floating cold-storage plant; Juneau Cold Storage Co., and National Independent Fisheries Co., at Juneau; Taku Canning & Cold Storage Co., at Taku Harbor; New England Fish Co., and Washington Fish & Oyster Co., at Ketchikan; and the San Juan Fishing & Packing Co., Inc., at Seward. Buyers for the Ripley Fish Co., were located at Petersburg and Ketchikan.

The New England Fish Co. suffered the loss of the steamer Manhattan off Cape Spencer during a severe storm on November 15, 1917. This vessel (134 tons net) was valued at \$125,000. The loss of life in the halibut industry is not definitely known. The only reported loss was that of one fisherman who was accidentally killed.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

The investment in the halibut industry in Alaska was \$2,200,987 in 1917, as compared with \$2,149,311 in 1916, an increase of \$51,676. The number of persons employed in this fishery declined from 1,116 in 1916 to 909 in 1917, the difference having been absorbed by the salmon

industry and credited to it. The halibut fisheries produced a total of 13,153,411 pounds, valued at \$1,120,226. This is an increase of 1,657,854 pounds over the production in 1916. In a comparison of the selling price of halibut by independent fishing vessels at the ports of Seattle, Prince Rupert, and Ketchikan, it appears that the average price per pound received by the fishermen throughout the year was $9\frac{1}{2}$ cents at Ketchikan, $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents at Prince Rupert, and $15\frac{1}{2}$ cents at Seattle. The average price at Petersburg was probably not higher than $7\frac{1}{2}$ or 8 cents per pound. The Ketchikan figures are based on prices paid in January, February, March, June, August, and September. Quotations for the other months are not reported, but it is improbable that the general average would be materially changed by their inclusion. Prices for the months named ranged from $12\frac{1}{4}$ cents in February to 7 cents in March.

Prices for Prince Rupert are for the entire year and are $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent higher than at the Alaskan port. The highest price was $18\frac{3}{4}$ cents per pound in October, and the lowest 7 cents in March.

Seattle prices average $66\frac{2}{3}$ per cent higher than those at Ketchikan. Halibut sold in May at 8 cents per pound and in September at 30 cents.

INVESTMENT IN THE ALASKA HALIBUT FISHERIES IN 1917.

Items	Number.	Value.	Items.	Number.	Value.
Fishing vessels:			Dories & Scows.....	299	\$18,800
Steamer and gas.	136	\$954,090	Fishing apparatus.....		57,105
Tonnage.....	2,536	Shore and fixed property.....		265,100
Sailing.....	1	153,000	Total.....		2,200,987
Tonnage.....	2,247			
Launches.....	3	2,892			
Outfit.....		750,000			

PERSONS ENGAGED IN THE ALASKA HALIBUT FISHERIES IN 1917.

Races.	Number.
Whites.....	899
Natives.....	10
Total.....	909

PRODUCT OF THE ALASKA HALIBUT FISHERY IN 1917.

Products.	Pounds.	Values.
Halibut:		
Fresh (including local).....	7,038,283	\$605,205
Frozen.....	6,115,128	515,021
Total.....	13,153,411	1,120,226

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The total catch of halibut on the Pacific coast was approximately 60,000,000 pounds, of which probably 30,000,000 pounds were taken from the grounds contiguous to the coast of Alaska. Available statistics show, however, that only a little more than 13,000,000 pounds were credited to Alaska. Undoubtedly a large part of the halibut delivered at Prince Rupert are also taken on these grounds, so that the estimate as above given is substantially correct.

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Tonnage.....	2,536	Shore and fixed property.....		265,100
Sailing.....	1	153,000	Total.....		2,200,987
Tonnage.....	2,247			
Launches.....	3	2,892			
Outfit.....	750,000			

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Habitat Fishery

The habitat fishery of Alaska comes next to the salmon fishery in production and value of product. It comprises seven fishing grounds, which from east to west are as follows: Noyes Island, Coronation Island, Cape Spencer, Yakutat, Yakataga, Cape Clear, and Portlock Banks. All of these localities are visited by the larger vessels of the habitat fleet, the Yakutat grounds and Portlock Banks producing the bulk of the catch delivered at Seattle Puget Sound and British Columbia ports. The smaller vessels frequent the

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(Continued on page 7)

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Steamer and Gas	136	954,090	Fishing apparatus		57,105
Tonnage	2536		Shore and fixed property		265,100
Sailing	1	153,000			
Tonnage	2247				
Launches	3	2,892	Total		\$ 2,200,987
Outfit		750,000			

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